

# Frankfort Trip Has Become Annual Experience for Fulton Co. ATC Students

On any given day school groups from across the Commonwealth make the journey to Frankfort to see the workings of state government, have a quick lunch and head home after a few hours of activity. However, students and faculty from the Fulton Co. Area Technology Center (ATC) have taken their “Frankfort” trip to new heights with an opportunity to see, learn about, and experience government.

This year marked the third outing of its kind for ATC Principal Tom Pyron, Economics Instructor Gail Rhodes, and Business Law Instructor Allan Paul. They, as well as interested parents, were the chaperones of 20 bright and enthusiastic students from the ATC.

The group spent two days visiting the old and current Capitol buildings, both chambers of the General Assembly, the Vietnam Veterans’ Memorial and the Kentucky History Center. Each stop became a living classroom as students, equipped with pencils and question/answer sheets, took notes and studied everything around them for future

A quiet moment at the  
Vietnam Veterans’ Memorial

discussions once they were back at school.

They had the honor of meeting with their State Senator Bob Jackson and State Representative Charles Geveden.

DTE Commissioner Emil Jezik met the group on day two of the trip for lunch and encouraged the students to play an active role in government on all levels.

“It’s necessary to teach young people, at this point in their lives, the importance of government and how much they can and will make a difference in future civic decisions.” said Commissioner Jezik.

“I think the personal contact and conversations the students had with Representative Geveden, Commissioner Jezik, and others helped them understand that our leaders are real people with personalities and senses of humor who can be approached and engaged in conversation,” said Mr. Pyron. “The distinction they could see in our state’s leaders places importance on community service and their desire to make a difference. I hope these impressions will stay with our students and that some of them will chose to enter government someday.”



Pictured from top, clockwise: Business Law Instructor Allan Paul listens with students Amber Morgan, left, Jacob Paul, top and Kelsey Bennet during a debate in the House of Representatives; students got a birds eye view of the House Chamber from the gallery; Rep. Charles Geveden introduces the Fulton. Co. ATC group from the floor.





Pictured clockwise, above: The Fulton Co. ATC group poses in front of the Capitol; Principal Tom Pyron helps student Brey Powell etch the name of Fulton County's lone casualty of the Vietnam War onto a piece of paper at the Vietnam Veterans' Memorial; Pastor Mark Gibbons gives students a quick tour of the facilities at the Lawrenceburg United Methodist Church.

Ms. Rhodes, the 1999 KY Tech Teacher of the Year, sees multiple advantages for those taking part in this trip.

"Our students are required to have a government credit and both our economics and business law classes fulfill that requirement. Adding a trip like this compliments what we are teaching in the classroom," she said.

Mr. Paul acknowledges that same idea. "We can only teach so much out of the book. These students will learn volumes through this experience," he said.

In order to make the trip more affordable, Mr. Pyron has discovered a creative form of





Pictured top and right: Students take notes as part of their studies while visiting the Vietnam Veterans' Memorial. Below inset: DTE Commissioner Emil Jezik talks with student Roxanne Nicholson and Principal Tom Pyron.

accommodations. Every year the group has "camped out" at the Lawrenceburg United Methodist Church. Pastor Mark Gibbons offers them the church gym, which has a kitchen, showers and plenty of space for sleeping bags.

"We want as many students to take advantage of this trip as possible," said Mr. Pyron. "The hospitality of the church and its members makes it more affordable and enjoyable for everyone."

